



**Open letter**

To the attention of His Excellency Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of Gambia  
[info@op.gov.gm](mailto:info@op.gov.gm)

To the attention of Hon. Fabakary Tombong Jatta, Chairperson of the National Assembly of Gambia  
[clerk@assembly.gm](mailto:clerk@assembly.gm) | [nationalassembly32@gmail.com](mailto:nationalassembly32@gmail.com) | [assemblyspeakerftj@gmail.com](mailto:assemblyspeakerftj@gmail.com) |  
[masise@assembly.gm](mailto:masise@assembly.gm)

To the attention of Hon. Amadou Camara, Chairperson of the Select Committee on Health, Refugees,  
Disaster & Humanitarian Relief of the National Assembly of Gambia  
[bccpro2019@gmail.com](mailto:bccpro2019@gmail.com)

To the attention of Hon. Fatoumata Njai, Chairperson of the Select Committee on Gender, Children and  
Social Welfare of the National Assembly of Gambia  
[touma@yayi-denton.org](mailto:touma@yayi-denton.org) | [suwaiboutouray@yahoo.com](mailto:suwaiboutouray@yahoo.com)

To the attention of Hon. Dawda A. Jallow, Minister of Justice  
[info@moj.gov.gm](mailto:info@moj.gov.gm)

To the attention of Hon. Fatou Kinteh, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Welfare  
[info@mogcsw.gov.gm](mailto:info@mogcsw.gov.gm)

12 June 2024

Your Excellencies,

I am writing to you on behalf of the [World Medical Association](#) (WMA), the global federation of National Medical Associations representing millions of physicians worldwide. The WMA plays a key role in promoting good practice, medical ethics and medical accountability internationally.

We would like to express our deepest concerns regarding the bill to lift the ban on female genital mutilation (FGM) in the Gambia, which will be examined by your National Assembly during its second ordinary session of 2024, in June and July.

The WMA has long condemned genital mutilation as a gross violation of the human rights of girls and women and strongly opposes the involvement of physicians in this practice. As physicians, we stress the permanent damage to health caused by this cruel practice, including haemorrhages, infections, shock and severe chronic pain, urologic and obstetric complications and even death during or after mutilation.

In line with the [WMA Statement on Female Genital Mutilation](#) and the [Resolution](#) adopted by the WMA Council last April, I call on the Gambian authorities to immediately withdraw the bill lifting the ban on female genital mutilation and to comply with its international human rights obligations, in particular the Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, all of which Gambia ratified.

I trust that you will take the necessary urgent measures within your remit, not only to reject this highly questionable bill, but also to ensure that the current ban on this practice is effectively enforced in the country by tackling the root causes and drivers of FGM. The implementation of robust and comprehensive policies in this area is crucial to empower women and girls to claim and exercise their human rights.

Your sincerely,



Dr Lujain Al-Qodmani,  
President of the World Medical Association

Copy:

- The Pan-African Parliament (PAP), [info@panafricanparliament.org](mailto:info@panafricanparliament.org)
- The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Parliament ([info@thegambiahc.org.ng](mailto:info@thegambiahc.org.ng) | [ckondor@ecowas.int](mailto:ckondor@ecowas.int) | [nttouray@motie.gm](mailto:nttouray@motie.gm) | [nttouray@gmail.com](mailto:nttouray@gmail.com))
- Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Gambia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva ([info@thegambiamissiongeneva.ch](mailto:info@thegambiamissiongeneva.ch))